

In addition to the Federal marketplace, foreign markets offer significant opportunities for small business owners to compete and win. While the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) are opening markets abroad, my Administration's National Export Strategy has made it easier here at home for small businesses to export. Among other things, we've opened 14 U.S. Export Assistance Centers to provide one-stop access to export information, marketing assistance, and finance.

Technology and Innovation

Technological innovation by small firms is a major reason for America's leadership in the world economy. Through the Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer programs, the Federal Government taps into the brain power of small businesses to meet its own research needs. In the process, these programs help spur technological innovation to foster new businesses and jobs.

The Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program alone has nearly doubled awards to small businesses during my Administration—up from \$508 million in 1992 to more than \$900 million in 1995. And the quality of SBIR research proposals has kept pace with the program's expansion.

We've also dramatically expanded the Manufacturing Extension Partnership to help America's 380,000 smaller manufacturers become more competitive in world markets. Sixty locally managed manufacturing extension centers—up from seven in 1993—are delivering much-needed services to this important small business sector.

As this report documents, changes are coming at lightning speed. Small business owners recognize that they will need all the technological skill and "connectivity" they can muster just to keep up. Through manufacturing extension centers, FACNET, the U.S. Business Advisor, and other information networks, we can help make available the information small businesses need to start up and succeed.

The Human Factor

If the heart of our entrepreneurial economy is small business, then the heart of small business is its people—small business owners and their employees. We need to work with small businesses to strengthen and support this dynamic human resource.

We've seen what business growth can do for communities, and we hope to encourage more business formation in empowerment zones and enterprise communities: legislation before the Congress would provide more tax incentives and waivers of some regulatory requirements in these areas. SBA's one-stop capital shops specifically target empowerment zones and enterprise communities.

As I mentioned earlier, we're taking steps to modify the tax code in ways that will make it easier for small busi-

nesses to offer health care and retirement plans to their employees. We also want to make sure that workers and their families can keep their health insurance even when they change jobs. I have urged the Congress to enact the Kassebaum-Kennedy bill, which would make health insurance coverage more "portable" for our Nation's workers.

We want to make better use of our work force training dollars by consolidating and streamlining many of our Federal work force training programs. Under our proposal, States and localities would have more flexibility to administer these programs in the way that will do the most good for our workers and small business owners.

I'm pleased that young entrepreneurs were represented at the White House Conference on Small Business and that the conference looked to our economic future by endorsing more mentorships and workplace educational opportunities for young people. These private-sector-led efforts form an essential part of the work-based learning program I envisioned when I signed into law the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994.

It takes a great deal of courage to start something new, to carve a reality out of a dream, often with few resources, sometimes in adverse surroundings, and in an economy that demands much of its participants. That is why we celebrate and listen to America's small business owners and why we will continue to look for ways to nurture and support this powerful economic engine—the small business sector.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, June 5, 1996.

□ 1030

PERMISSION FOR SUNDRY COMMITTEES AND THEIR SUBCOMMITTEES TO SIT TODAY DURING THE 5-MINUTE RULE

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the following committees and their subcommittees be permitted to sit today while the House is meeting in the Committee of the Whole House under the 5-minute rule: The Committee on Agriculture, the Committee on Banking and Financial Services, the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee on Resources, and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

It is my understanding that the minority has been consulted and that there is no objection to these requests.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HEFLEY). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3540, FOREIGN OPERATIONS, EXPORT FINANCING, AND RELATED PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1997

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 445 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 445

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 1(b) of rule XXIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3540) making appropriations for foreign operations, export financing, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1997, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. Points of order against consideration of the bill for failure to comply with clause 1(b) of rule X or clause 7 of rule XXI are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The bill shall be considered by title rather than by paragraph. Each title shall be considered as read. Points of order against provisions in the bill for failure to comply with clause 2, 5(b), or 6 of rule XXI are waived except as follows: beginning with "Provided" on page 9, line 12, through "Appropriations" on line 18; and beginning with "Provided" on page 13, line 20, through "relocation" on page 14, line 5. Where points of order are waived against part of a paragraph, points of order against a provision in another part of such paragraph may be made only against such provision and not against the entire paragraph. During consideration of the bill for amendment, the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may accord priority in recognition on the basis of whether the Member offering an amendment has caused it to be printed in the portion of the Congressional Record designated for that purpose in clause 6 of rule XXIII. Amendments so printed shall be considered as read. The Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may postpone until a time during further consideration in the Committee of the Whole a request for a recorded vote on any amendment. The Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may reduce to not less than five minutes the time for voting by electronic device on any postponed question that immediately follows another vote by electronic device without intervening business, provided that the time for voting by electronic device on the first in any series of questions shall be not less than fifteen minutes. After the reading of the final lines of the bill, a motion that the Committee of the Whole rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted shall, if offered by the majority leader or a designee, have precedence over a motion to amend. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS] is recognized for 1 hour.